

U.S. Department of the Interior



NEWS

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**Remarks Prepared for Delivery
The Hon. Gale Norton, Secretary of the Interior
National Park Foundation and Ford Motor Company Event
Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.
June 7, 2001**

On behalf of the Department of Interior and the Board of Directors of the National Park Foundation, I am pleased to join you this morning to welcome Red Bus #98 back onto the road.

For over 70 years, Red Bus #98, and over 30 others, cruised daily to Glacier National parks' Sun Road.



From, left to right, Joseph Fasslar, Chairman Glacier National Park, Inc.; Janet Mullins Grisson, Ford Motor Company Vice President; Interior Secretary Gale Norton; Suzanne Lewis, Superintendent Glacier National Park; Dr. Robert Wise; Jim Maddy, National Park Foundation President; Congressman Dennis Rehberg, and Denis Galvin, Acting Director National Park Service

The buses explored the one million acres of forests, lakes, meadows, and high rocky peaks. Generations of visitors looked out the Red Bus windows at over 60 species of mammals and over 270 species of birds dotting the majestic landscape of Glacier National Park.

In 1999, safety and environmental concerns forced the fleet into retirement.

They were on the brink of fading into history - just a faint memory to those lucky enough to have a ride.

Thanks to the Ford Motor Company and the National Park Foundation, the Red Bus will once again journey along the winding roads of Glacier Park.

New generations of Americans will experience the nostalgia of the Red Bus and the majesty and beauty of Glacier.

Ford replaced the buses old-style engines with new ones that dramatically reduce emissions. The buses run on a high-tech bifuel system that will greatly limit air pollution and traffic congestion in the park.



From right, Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, and Dr. Robert Wise, who was the first driver of Red Bus #98 when it entered service in 1936

This bus will also teach about dynamic alternative fuel systems, and the need to develop new technologies for the future.

One of the best parts of my job is working with the National Park Service. Our national parks connect Americans with their lands, give us a common landscape and a shared national experience.

This Administration is committed to protecting these treasures. Just last week President Bush announced his National Parks Legacy Project.

The President's program will eliminate the \$4.9 billion maintenance backlog hampering our parks

The President's budget also calls for the Land and Water Conservation Fund to be funded at the fully authorized level of \$900 million. For the first time since the Fund's inception four decades ago, a full 50 percent - \$450 million - will go to directly to the states.

We are also committed to increasing funds for the Natural Resource Challenge. This program helps species and habitats thrive in our parks. We are also fully funding programs to protect parklands from the ravages of wildland fire.

With so many challenges facing our National Parks, we can't do the work alone. We need to form partnerships with individuals, organizations and corporations to appreciate, protect and enhance the Parks.

I am honored to serve as Chairman of the National Park Foundation, the official nonprofit partner of the National Park Service.

The National Park Foundation is taking the lead on finding innovative ways to improve our parks. The NPF has an impressive roster of individuals committed to our Parks.

They include David Rockefeller, Jr., who serves as Vice Chairman of the NPF Board. I am grateful to Jim Maddy, President of the National Park Foundation for his leadership and service to country.

On behalf of the National Park Service and people of America, an enormous thank you goes to the Ford Motor Company.

Through their act of corporate kindness, Ford has done more than simply return #98 to service. Ford has demonstrated an extraordinary act of stewardship to our Parks. They will no doubt inspire others to become stewards too.

Ladies and gentlemen, it's my honor and pleasure to introduce Janet Mullins Grissom, Vice President of Washington Affairs for the Ford Motor Company.